

- Although **fish** is an excellent source of protein that is low in fat, when you are pregnant you need to **be cautious about the types and amounts of fish** you eat because of mercury and PCB contamination. Nearly all fish contain some amount of mercury. Long-lived, larger fish have the highest levels and should not be eaten during pregnancy. These include: **shark, swordfish, king mackerel, blue fish, and tilefish. Lobster tomalley** – the soft green substance found in the tail and body section of a lobster – should not be eaten by anyone.
- The following fish can be eaten but please **do not eat more than 12 ounces in a week: shrimp, canned light tuna, salmon, catfish, cod, haddock and flounder.**
- Limit **albacore tuna** to 6 ounces a week.
- For **freshwater fish advisories**, please visit mass.gov/dph/fishadvisories.
- The Massachusetts Department of Public Health (DPH) publishes additional cautions and guidelines on consumption during pregnancy of **lobster, bivalves (such as mussels, oysters, scallops, and clams), flounder, shellfish, and other species.** There are restrictions for certain species caught in certain areas within Massachusetts. Please visit mass.gov/doc/a-guide-to-eating-fish-safely-in-massachusetts/download for more information.
- Please ask your doctor if you have questions about fish consumption. Please note that your **total intake of any safe fish should be limited to two servings a week.**

I have a lot of nausea and vomiting. What should I do?

Nausea and vomiting is common in early pregnancy. In most cases, this is easily managed with some changes in diet and, in severe cases, the use of anti-nausea medicine (if prescribed by your provider). Nausea and vomiting usually pass after about 12 weeks. You may find that eating dry carbohydrates, like toast, crackers, or rice, helps decrease nausea. You may want to try an acupressure wristband (available at many pharmacies), which is designed to treat nausea and is often used to prevent motion sickness. Some providers recommend the use of Vitamin B-6 as a treatment for nausea.

Ginger in the diet may help. You may want to try ginger ale, ginger hard candy, or ginger tea. Keeping a small amount of food in the stomach at all times works well for some. Try to eat something any time you feel hungry. Listen to your body, and don't be overly concerned about gaining weight. Taking in small, healthy snacks every few hours throughout the day may help you avoid nausea. Try to stay away from strong odors, and spicy, greasy, or acidic foods.

In rare cases, these measures are not effective and nausea and vomiting are severe. If you are not able to hold anything down for 24 hours, please call your obstetric provider. You could become dehydrated, which is not good for you or your baby. Your provider may prescribe medicine to help control vomiting, and may want you to visit the hospital for intravenous (IV) fluids to prevent dehydration. Try to remember that the nausea and vomiting of pregnancy nearly always subside after the first few months. Stay in touch with your obstetric provider for additional advice about how to manage until this phase of pregnancy passes.

What is WIC?

If you find that buying enough nutritious food is difficult on your budget, the WIC program may be able to help. WIC stands for "Women, Infants, and Children." It is a nationally-funded program that helps ensure that those who are pregnant or breast-feeding, and their children, get the nutrition they need. There are income guidelines for WIC enrollment.

If you are interested in this program, your obstetric provider can fill out a referral form for you. Call 1-800-WIC-1007 (1-800-942-1007) to find out where there is a WIC office near you, or visit www.mass.gov/wic. You will need to make an appointment at the WIC office to be enrolled in the program.

This material was prepared by clinicians from the Department of Obstetrics and Gynecology at Beth Israel Deaconess Medical Center. It is produced and distributed by the Beth Israel Deaconess Learning Center.

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Eating Well

Good eating habits during pregnancy will help make sure both you and your baby are as healthy as possible. Here are some common questions about eating and drinking during pregnancy. The chart on pages 2 and 3 tells you what foods you need for healthy eating and how much of each food is recommended each day. If you have special concerns or needs regarding nutrition, ask about a referral to a dietitian.

How much weight should I gain?

Many people gain between 25 and 35 pounds during pregnancy, but everyone is different, and a range of weight gain can be normal. If you were underweight before the pregnancy, you may gain more; if you started out overweight, you may be able to safely gain less. Check with your obstetric provider about the amount of weight gain that is right for you. In general, it's not the number of pounds you gain that is important – it's whether you are eating well and whether your baby is growing as it should.

Remember, you should not diet to lose weight during pregnancy. If you are concerned that you are gaining too much weight, or not gaining enough, please talk with your obstetric provider. Your pattern of weight gain may be normal for you. Let your provider help you decide what to do.

What precautions must I follow regarding foods or drinks?

There are some precautions you must take regarding what you eat and drink. Some foods may contain bacteria or other organisms that could be harmful to you or your baby. Other foods or drinks have toxic materials that could have harmful effects on your baby's growth and development.

Please follow the guidelines below regarding food and fluids. Ask your provider if you have any questions.

- **Do not drink alcohol** at all. It is not known how much alcohol is safe for the unborn baby. So we recommend that you do not drink. If you are having trouble not drinking, please discuss this with your obstetric provider.
- **Do not eat raw or undercooked meat, eggs, poultry, or fish.** This includes **raw clams, oysters, or any other uncooked fish or sushi (cooked sushi is okay).** These may contain bacteria or other organisms that could be harmful to your baby. Please wash hands, cooking surfaces, and utensils well if they have been exposed to raw meat, eggs, poultry, or fish.
- Please **wash all fruits and vegetables** before eating, especially fruits that require peeling or cutting – like cantaloupe and other melons. Bacteria can be found on the outer rind or peel.
- **Do not eat** cheese made with unpasteurized milk. Be especially careful of the following types; check the label to see if unpasteurized milk was used: **brie; feta; Camembert; blue-veined cheese such as Roquefort; Mexican-style cheese such as queso blanco, queso fresco, queso de hoja, queso de crema, and asadero.** Semi-soft and hard cheese, such as mozzarella, parmesan, Swiss, and cheddar, are okay. Processed cheeses and cottage cheese are also safe.
- **Do not drink unpasteurized milk or fruit juices.**
- You must **heat until steaming hot all hot dogs, luncheon meats, or deli meats** (such as bologna) as these can also contain bacteria that can be harmful.
- **Do not eat non-cooked, processed (smoked), or refrigerated pate or meat spreads.**
- To prevent listeriosis, **do not eat refrigerated smoked seafood** (most often labeled "nova-style," "lox," "kippered," "smoked," or "jerky").
- Please **limit the amount of caffeine** in your diet to 250 mg/day. Most people get caffeine from coffee or cola drinks. Caffeine is also found in chocolate, tea, and some over-the-counter medicines.

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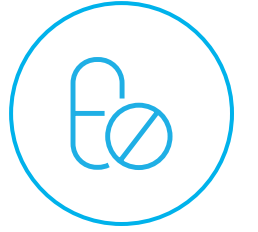
Eating Well During Pregnancy

What you need	Where to find it	Why you need it	How much you need
Protein	Meat, chicken, fish, liver, eggs, soybeans, peanut butter, dried beans and peas, tofu	Protein is the building material for the body. It supplies energy and promotes healthy growth and development. <i>* Limit weekly fish consumption according to the guidelines on page 4.</i>	You need 2 or more servings per day. One serving is: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2-3 ounces of cooked meat, fish*, or poultry • 1 cup of cooked dried beans or peas • 2 eggs • 1 cup of tofu • 4 tablespoons of peanut butter
Milk products	Milk, buttermilk, yogurt, cheese (no cheese made with unpasteurized milk)	Milk is an excellent source of vitamins, minerals, and protein. It also has calcium, which builds healthy bones and teeth. It is important for the baby's bone development.	You need 4 servings a day. One serving is: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1 cup of milk or yogurt • 1 ½ ounces of cheese
Fruits and vegetables	Sources of Vitamin C: Citrus fruits (oranges, grapefruit), strawberries, tomatoes, peppers, cantaloupe	Vitamin C is needed to build strong body cells, blood, and healthy gums and teeth.	You need at least 1 serving a day of a high-Vitamin C fruit or vegetable.
	Leafy green or dark orange vegetables: Spinach, broccoli, carrots, sweet potatoes, dark lettuce, kale, cabbage, collard greens, yams	These vegetables are an important source of Vitamin A. This is needed for healthy development of bones, hair, skin, glands, and vision for your baby.	You need at least 1 serving a day of a leafy green or dark orange vegetable.
	Other vegetables and fruit: All other vegetables, (cooked or raw), and all other fruit (fresh, canned, or frozen)	These are also good sources of Vitamin A and other vitamins and minerals.	You need a total of at least 5 servings a day of all vegetables and fruits. One serving is: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1 cup raw vegetables • ½ cup cooked vegetables • ¾ cup fruit or vegetable juice • ½ cup cooked or canned chopped fruit • 1 medium-sized piece of fruit
Grain	Bread, cereal, crackers, pasta, rice, cornbread, pancakes, tortillas, wheat germ, grits	Whole grain products, such as whole wheat bread, bran cereal, and whole wheat crackers, contain B vitamins. They help your baby to grow and help your body use energy well. Try not to use highly processed grains, like white bread and white rolls. These have lost much of their nutrition.	You need 6-9 servings a day of grain. One serving is: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1 slice of bread • 1 cup of ready-to-eat cereal • ½ cup cooked cereal, rice, or pasta
Fluids	Water, milk, herbal teas	There are fluids in every cell of your body, and a lot of fluid in your growing baby as well. You must be sure to drink enough during your pregnancy.	You need 8-10 glasses a day, 8 ounces each glass.

A Special Note About Vitamin Supplements, Iron, and Folic Acid (Folate)

Prenatal vitamins are recommended by almost all obstetric providers as a way of making sure you get the nutritional support that both you and your baby need. They come in tablets, chewable tablets, liquids, or “gummy” preparations. Sometimes, prenatal vitamins can cause nausea and you may need to stop taking them for a while. Speak to your provider if this happens to you.

Some people prefer not to take prenatal vitamins, or find that certain types of vitamins (such as those with iron) cause unpleasant side effects. Most people are able to take in nearly everything they need for a healthy pregnancy by following a healthy, well-balanced diet, as described in the attached chart. However, there are two important exceptions.



Folic acid

Folic acid, or folate, has been found to be important in preventing the development of a group of birth defects called neural tube defects. Examples of neural tube defects are spina bifida and anencephaly. Folic acid is also needed by both you and your baby to form red blood cells.

While you are pregnant, your need for folic acid is 800 micrograms (mcgs.) per day. It can be difficult to take in this much folic acid through diet alone. This is one important reason why prenatal vitamins, which contain the full requirement of folic acid (or more), are almost always recommended in pregnancy.

Iron

Your need for iron begins in the first trimester and continues through childbirth. Iron is an important part of the body's blood cells. It is needed during pregnancy to form red blood cells in both you and your baby. However, because of loss of iron with the monthly periods, you may be entering pregnancy low on iron. This can lead to low red blood cell counts, which is not good for you or your baby.



Make sure that foods high in iron are a regular part of your diet. In some cases, your provider may recommend that you take an iron supplement or a prenatal vitamin that includes a certain amount of iron. Some foods rich in iron are listed in the chart to the right. Your obstetric provider will routinely check your red blood cell counts to make sure you are getting enough iron.

Folic acid

Most prenatal vitamins have 800 micrograms; some have 1 milligram, which is 1,000 micrograms.

(You do not need to take 1,000 micrograms unless directed to do so by your provider.)

Food sources of iron

- beef, chicken, turkey
- tuna
- shrimp
- beans: black, navy, kidney, pinto beans, and chickpeas
- tofu
- apricots
- spinach
- swiss chard
- collard greens
- broccoli
- enriched breads and cereals
- egg yolk
- blackstrap molasses
- pumpkin seeds
- prunes
- kale
- wheat germ
- whole grains